

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A tomato product having the following composition (percentage by weight):

-dry residue greater than 20% and up to ~~85%~~, to 80%,

-water less than 80% and down to ~~15%~~, to 20%,

100% being the sum of the two components;

wherein the amount of water insoluble solids and water soluble solids in the dry residue ranges in percentage by weight as follows:

-water insoluble solids from 18% to ~~70%~~, up to 30%,

-water soluble solids from 82% to ~~30%~~, down to 70%.

Claims 2-4 (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) A composition comprising the tomato product according to claim 1 in admixture with lyophilized, or cryoconcentrated, or concentrated tomato juice serum, said mixtures having a water insoluble content between ~~18%-70%~~, 18%-30%.

6. (Previously Presented) A composition comprising the tomato product of claim 1 in admixture with foods.

7. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 6, wherein said foods are selected from the following: first courses, soups, purée, sauces, juices, legumes, vegetables, yoghurts, cottage cheese and dairy products.

8. (Previously Presented) A sauce comprising the tomato product of claim 1.

9. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 6, wherein the foods are selected from the group consisting of animal and vegetable fats, which are solid at room

temperature; fats, which are liquid at room temperature, and cheese having soft- or fresh- grain or hard-grain and grated.

10. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 6, wherein the foods are water in oil or oil in water emulsions.

11. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 9, wherein the amount of oil ranges from 10 to 25% by weight of the weight of the tomato product present; the amount of solid fats and of soft-grain cheese ranges from 30% to 300% by weight of the weight of the tomato product present.

12. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 9, wherein the amount of hard-grain and grated cheese ranges from 10% to 25% by weight of the weight of the tomato product present.

13. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 10, further comprising mayonnaise, wherein an amount of the mayonnaise ranges from 90% to 20% by weight of the weight of the tomato product present.

Claim 14 (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a tomato product according to claim 1 comprising the following steps:

a) separating tomato serum from a starting tomato product by filtering the starting tomato product using a solid-liquid separation apparatus so as to form a compact mass on a filter, wherein the starting tomato product is maintained under a slow stirring by a stirrer having an angular speed from 1 to 20 rpm, at a temperature in the range of 5-40°C, for a time until a compact mass is formed;

b) recovering the compact mass on the filter;

c) concentrating and/or lyophilizing the compact mass recovered in b) and obtaining a product having a residual water content lower than 80% by weight, down to ~~15%~~ 20% by weight.

16. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 15, wherein the starting tomato product is selected from the group consisting of tomato juice, tomato passatas, tomato cubes, chopped tomatoes, and peeled tomatoes.

17. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 15, wherein step a) is carried out under atmospheric pressure, or by using slightly higher pressures, from 760 mm Hg (0.101 MPa) up to 900 mm Hg (0.12 MPa), or by applying pressures slightly lower than atmospheric pressure, down to 450 mm Hg (0.06 MPa).

18. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 15, wherein in step a) the solid-liquid separation apparatus is equipped with a centrally placed stirrer having stirrer blades being of a shape such that a suspension being stirred is conveyed to the central axis of the apparatus.

19. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 15, wherein a solid-liquid separation apparatus is used which rotates around the longitudinal axis.

20. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 15, wherein the solid-liquid separation apparatus is constituted by a sieve kept under an oscillatory motion or a nutational motion, wherein the oscillatory motion is from 1 to 20 oscillations/minute.

21. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 15, wherein the solid liquid separation apparatus is constituted of a reactor having walls with openings or slots formed with woven wire cloth or with wire screens or welding screens; or the walls have punched holes or drilled holes or slot milled holes or beam perforated holes.

22. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 21, wherein the width of the openings or slots, or the diameter in the case of holes, is not greater than 0.1 mm and not lower than 0.005 mm, the length of the slots being between 30 cm and 2 meters.

23. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 15, wherein in step a) a cylinder is used which is fixed and has inside a stirrer in the form of an Archimedean screw, or the apparatus is rotating around the longitudinal central axis and has the shape of an helix wound about its own axis, the angular speed being from 2 to 10 rpm.

24. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 23, wherein the cylinder has a diameter ranging from 30 cm to 1 meter and length from 2 meters to 20 meters.

25. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 15, wherein the solid-liquid separation apparatus is of metal or plastic material.

26. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 15 carried out under sterile conditions, or wherein the obtained tomato product is sterilized.

27. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 15, wherein the starting tomato product is a tomato juice suspension and when said tomato juice suspension is obtained from partially ripened fruits are used, a width of slots, or diameter of holes of the solid-liquid separation apparatus in step a) is higher than 0.1 mm but not higher than 0.5 mm.

28. (Currently Amended) A method for improving the saucing power of foods, which comprises admixing foods with ~~the tomato product of claim 1~~, a tomato product having the following composition (percentage by weight):

- dry residue greater than 20% and up to 85%,

- water less than 80% and down to 15%,

100% being the sum of the two components;

wherein the amount of water insoluble solids and water soluble solids in the dry residue ranges in percentage by weight as follows:

-water insoluble solids from 18% to 70%,

-water soluble solids from 82% down to 30%.

29. (Currently amended) A method of using a condiment on foods which comprises admixing foods with a tomato product ~~according to claim 1~~, having the following composition (percentage by weight):

-dry residue greater than 20% and up to 85%,

-water less than 80% down to 15%,

100% being the sum of the two components:

wherein the amount of water insoluble solids and water soluble solids in the dry residue ranges in percentage by weight as follows:

-water insoluble solids from 18% to 70%,

-water soluble solids from 82% down to 30%.

30. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 15, wherein in step a) the starting tomato product is tomato juice and the tomato juice is previously treated by a hot break or cold break process.

31. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing the tomato products according to claim 1 comprising the following steps:

- a) separating tomato serum from a starting tomato product by filtering the starting tomato product using a solid-liquid separation apparatus to form a compact mass on a filter, wherein the starting tomato product is maintained under a slow stirring by a stirrer having an angular speed from 1 to 20 rpm, at a temperature in the range of 5-40°C, for a time until a compact mass is formed;
- b) optionally adding one or more additions of water and repeating step a);
- c) recovering the compact mass on the filter and optionally adding concentrated serum;
- d) concentrating and/or lyophilizing the compact mass recovered in c) and obtaining of a product having a residual water content lower than 80% by weight, ~~down to 15%~~ to 20% by weight.

32. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing the tomato products according to claim 1 comprising the following steps:

- a) separating tomato serum from a starting tomato product by filtering the starting tomato product using a solid-liquid separation apparatus, wherein the starting tomato product is maintained

under a slow stirring by a stirrer having an angular speed from 1 to 20 rpm, at a temperature in the range of 5-40°C, for a time until a compact mass is formed on a filter;

b) recovering the compact mass on the filter and adding concentrated serum;

c) concentrating and/or lyophilizing the compact mass recovered in b) and obtaining a product having a residual water content lower than 80% by weight, down to ~~15%~~ to 20% by weight.

33. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing tomato products according to claim 1 comprising the following steps:

a) separating tomato serum from a starting tomato product by filtering the starting tomato product using a solid-liquid separation apparatus, wherein the starting tomato product is maintained under a slow stirring by a stirrer having an angular speed from 1 to 20 rpm, at a temperature in the range of 5-40°C, for a time until a compact mass is formed;

b) adding one or more additions of water and repeating step a);

c) recovering the compact mass on the filter;

d) concentrating and/or lyophilizing the compact mass recovered in c) and obtaining a product having a residual water content lower than 80% by weight, down to ~~15%~~ to 20% by weight.

Claim 34 (Cancelled)

35. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 6, wherein the foods are butter or margarine

36. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 6, wherein the food is mayonnaise.

37. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 6, wherein the foods used are vegetable oils.

38. (Previously Presented) A method of using a condiment on foods, which comprises applying the tomato product according to claim 1 to a food.

39. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 31, wherein in step a) the starting tomato product is selected from the group consisting of tomatoes, tomato juice, tomato passatas, tomato cubes, chopped tomatoes, and peeled tomatoes.

Claim 40 (Cancelled)

41. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 16, wherein the tomato juice is treated with a hot break or cold break process.

42. (Currently Amended) A tomato product,
wherein said tomato product is made according to the method of claim 15 and wherein said tomato product has the following composition (percentage by weight):

- dry residue greater than 20% and up to 85%,

- water less than 80% and down to 15%,

100% being the sum of the two components;

wherein the amount of water insoluble solids and water soluble solids in the dry residue ranges in percentage by weight as follows:

- water insoluble solids from 18% to 70%,

- water soluble solids from 82% down to 30%.

43. (New) A method according to claim 28 wherein the tomato product has the following composition (percentage by weight):

- dry residue greater than 20% and up to 80%,

- water less than 80% and down to 20%,

100% being the sum of the two components;

wherein the amount of water insoluble solids and water soluble solids in the dry resident ranges in percentage by weight as follows:

- water insoluble solids from 18% to 30%,

- water soluble solids from 82% down to 70%.

44. (New) A method according to claim 29 wherein the tomato product has the following composition (percentage by weight);

- dry residue greater than 20% and up to 80%,

- water less than 80% and down to 20%,

100% being the sum of the two components;

wherein the amount of water insoluble solids and water soluble solids in the dry residue ranges in percentage by weight as follows:

- water insoluble solids from 18% to 30%,

- water soluble solids from 82% down to 70%.